

**Advance Questions for General David H. Petraeus, US Army**  
**Nominee for Commander, U. S. Central Command**

**Defense Reforms**

**The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and the chain of command by clearly delineating the combatant commanders' responsibilities and authorities and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These reforms have also vastly improved cooperation between the services and the combatant commanders, among other things, in joint training and education and in the execution of military operations.**

**Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?**

The integration of joint capabilities under the Goldwater-Nichols Act has been a success. Our military forces are more interoperable today than they ever have been in our nation's history. This achievement has been remarkable. The next step is to ensure the ability of military and civilian departments to work closely together. Some progress has been made in this regard. The State Department's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, who has been given the lead by National Security Presidential Directive 44 (NSPD44), "Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization," has developed the Interagency Management System and a draft US Government Planning Framework. These tools provide a viable process, within existing authorities, to enhance and align military and civilian engagement in reconstruction and stabilization scenarios. They have also designed and begun to stand up the Civilian Response Corps system to provide increased civilian expeditionary capacity to complex operations. This system holds impressive potential. The Department of Defense has developed a working plan to support the implementation of NSPD44. The US will be well-served by having available the various tools to promote unity of effort across the US government.

**If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?**

One of the most pressing needs is for the creation of interagency doctrine for the prosecution of counterinsurgency and stability operations. Counterinsurgency requires the commitment of both military and civilian agencies, and unity of effort is crucial to success. NSPD44 represents a good overall start, and new military doctrine helps as well. The State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs has taken initial steps toward this end. In addition, the Consortium for Complex Operations has been stood up to serve as an intellectual clearinghouse for ideas and best practices on the many facets of irregular warfare. This appears to be a low-cost, high-payoff initiative.

**Do you believe that the role of the combatant commanders under the Goldwater-Nichols legislation is appropriate and the policies and processes in existence allow that role to be fulfilled?**

Yes, although, as mentioned above, further development of interagency capacity and doctrine is required.

**Do you see a need for any change in those roles, with regard to the resource allocation process or otherwise?**

Combatant commanders have increasingly focused on addressing the root causes of conflict in their regions in order to prevent the outbreak of violence and to mitigate the conditions that allow extremism to take hold. If confirmed, I anticipate maintaining this important focus. This focus requires investment in long-term economic and political development, makes whole-of-government approaches more important than ever, and requires even more coordination with civilian activities in combatant commands' AORs.

### **Relationships**

**Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Other sections of law and traditional practice, however, establish important relationships outside the chain of command. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, US Central Command, to the following officials:**

#### **The Secretary of Defense**

Subject to direction from the President, the Commander, US Central Command performs duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. In addition, the Commander, US Central Command is responsible to the Secretary of Defense for the preparedness of the command to carry out its missions.

#### **The Under Secretaries of Defense**

Commander, US Central Command coordinates and exchanges information with the Under Secretaries of Defense as needed to set and meet US Central Command priorities and requirements for support.

#### **The Assistant Secretaries of Defense**

Commander, US Central Command coordinates and exchanges information with the Assistant Secretaries of Defense as needed to set and meet US Central Command priorities and requirements for support.

### **The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

The Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense. Section 163 of title 10, US Code, allows communication between the President or the Secretary of Defense and the combatant commanders to flow through the Chairman. As is custom and traditional practice, and as instructed by the Unified Command Plan, I would communicate with the Secretary through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

### **The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**

I would communicate and coordinate with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as required and in the absence of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

### **The Director of the Joint Staff**

I would also communicate and coordinate with the Director as necessary and expect the Deputy Commander, US Central Command or Chief of Staff, US Central Command would communicate regularly with the Director of the Joint Staff.

### **The Secretaries of the Military Departments**

The Secretaries of the military departments are responsible for the administration and support of forces assigned to the combatant commands. Commander, US Central Command coordinates closely with the Secretaries to ensure that requirements to organize, train, and equip forces for Central Command are met.

### **The Service Chiefs**

Commander, US Central Command communicates and exchanges information with the Service Chiefs to support their responsibility for organizing, training, and equipping forces. Successful execution of the US Central Command mission responsibilities requires close coordination with the Service Chiefs. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the Service Chiefs to understand the capabilities of their Services and to ensure effective employment of those capabilities in the execution of the US Central Command mission.

### **The other combatant commanders**

Commander, US Central Command maintains close relationships with the other combatant commanders. These relationships are critical to the execution of our National Military Strategy, and are characterized by mutual support, frequent contact, and productive exchanges of information on key issues.

### **The US Ambassador to Iraq**

I would necessarily have a relationship with the US Ambassador to Iraq, in close coordination with the commander, Multi-National Force–Iraq, in order to ensure unity of effort between US military and other US government activities in Iraq and in the CENTCOM region.

### **The US Ambassador to Afghanistan**

I would necessarily have a close working relationship with the US Ambassador to Afghanistan, in close coordination with the US commander there, in order to ensure unity of effort between US military and other US government activities in Afghanistan and in the CENTCOM region.

### **Commander, Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF-I)**

Commander, US Central Command requires close cooperation with the Commander, MNF-I to support and resource the effort in Iraq to meet national policy goals. It is critical that the relationship between the Commander, US Central Command and the Commander, Multi-National Force–Iraq be close, candid, and productive to meet this end.

### **Commander, NATO International Security Assistance Force, Afghanistan**

Commander, US Central Command requires close cooperation with Commander, NATO-ISAF to support and resource the effort to achieve the goals of the NATO mandate in Afghanistan. There is no formal command relationship (though there are such relationships with the CSTC-A and the CJTF in Afghanistan). However, robust communications and coordination are necessary to ensure the achievement of strategic goals.

### **Qualifications**

**If confirmed, you will be entering this important position at a critical time for the US Central Command (CENTCOM).**

**What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position?**

First, I have extensive combat and command experience in the CENTCOM AOR. Having served in Iraq for over 3 1/2 years (as a division commander, MNSTC-I/NTM-I commander, and, now, MNF-I commander), I have a good understanding of the country's culture, its leaders, and its challenges. My current position as MNF-I Commander, in particular, has provided me with extensive knowledge about our operations in Iraq, ideas on best-practices that would be useful elsewhere, and relationships with leaders throughout the Middle East and with leaders of Coalition

countries. Though I have not served in Afghanistan, I did conduct a 5-day assessment there in September 2005 at the request of the Secretary of Defense, and my experience with counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations would, I hope, be useful in supporting GEN McKiernan and Coalition Forces operating there.

Second, I have had a number of relatively high-level joint assignments, including serving as a TDY Special Assistant to CINCSOUTH, as Military Assistant to the SACEUR, as Operations Chief of the UN Force in Haiti, as Executive Assistant to the CJCS, as the temporary duty commander of CFLCC-Forward in Kuwait, as ACOS OPS of SFOR in Bosnia, as commander of MNSTC-I/NTM-I, and, now, as commander of MNF-I.

Third, I believe I have an academic background that has intellectually prepared me for the challenges of high-level command and complex environments, as I have studied—as well as served in—major combat operations, counterinsurgency operations, peacekeeping operations, and peace enforcement operations. My doctoral dissertation at Princeton University was titled, “The American Military and the Lessons of Vietnam.” Most recently, while at Fort Leavenworth, I oversaw the development of the Army/Marine Cops manual on counterinsurgency and also changes to other Army doctrinal manuals, branch school curricula, leader development programs, combat training center rotations, the “Road to Deployment” concept, and other activities that support the preparation of our leaders and units for deployment to the CENTCOM AOR.

Fourth, I have in the past year, as part of my MNF-I duties, met with leaders in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Turkey, the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain, as well as with many of the leaders of the countries contributing forces in Iraq, many of whom also contribute forces in Afghanistan and the Gulf.

Finally, I believe that I have a solid understanding of the requirements of strategic-level leadership.

### **Major Challenges**

#### **In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Commander, US Central Command?**

Although there are numerous country-specific challenges in the region, a survey of the CENTCOM AOR as a whole reveals several transnational concerns that affect many or all of the region’s countries. These concerns are interrelated and create significant challenges for regional stability and for US interests in the region.

First is the violent extremism that poses a significant threat throughout the region. Though Al Qaeda is the highest visibility and priority terrorist organization, there are also many other extremist groups in the region.

Another concern in the region is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including related components and technical expertise. Iran's and Syria's nontransparent efforts to develop nuclear facilities could destabilize the region and spark a regional arms race. The need to secure existing nuclear material is a related and critical concern.

A lack of economic development in many of the region's countries is another transnational concern. This is both a humanitarian issue and a security issue, as poverty and lack of opportunity are often enablers of successful terrorist recruiting.

Another concern is the prevalence of piracy, narcotics trafficking, and arms smuggling in the CENTCOM AOR. In addition to being criminal and destructive activities, these practices threaten strategic resources and are often lucrative sources of funding for terrorists.

Because of the region's importance to the global economy, another concern is the free flow of strategic resources and international commerce through the region.

**If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?**

Although it is premature to have specific and comprehensive plans, there are several concepts that would guide my approach to the region's challenges, if I am confirmed.

First, we would seek to build partnerships in the region, pursuing bilateral and multilateral cooperation in identifying and working toward mutual interests. This involves extensive engagement with leaders in the region, and I would see this as one of my primary responsibilities as CENTCOM commander.

Second, we would aim for a whole-of-government approach in addressing the region's challenges. This approach recognizes that solutions for the region's challenges should be as multifaceted as the challenges themselves. Rather than engaging in purely military solutions, we would seek to leverage the insight and capabilities resident in the whole of government.

Third, and related, we would pursue comprehensive approaches and solutions, addressing the roots of issues and not just their manifestations. This entails efforts varying from spurring economic development and educational opportunity to strengthening governments' abilities to combat terrorism and extremism.

Fourth, we would posture our forces and maintain focus on readiness to conduct contingency operations, whether crisis response, deterrent action, or defeating aggressors.

These concepts can be applied to each of the transnational threats listed in the answers to the previous question, and they are also important in addressing and preventing the spread of inter- and intra-state conflicts in the CENTCOM AOR.

Signaling US resolve to address the region's challenges is one of the important roles of any combatant commander, and active pursuit of these concepts would also serve that purpose.

### **Most Serious Problems**

**What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of Commander, US Central Command? What management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?**

Having not yet performed those functions, I cannot say at this time what the most serious problems are. Until I have been confirmed and made an assessment, it would be premature to establish management actions or timelines.

### **Readiness of Forces**

**What is your assessment of the readiness of US forces that have been deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom?**

Units arrive in theater well prepared for the operations in Iraq. Indeed, I continue to believe that our current force is the best trained, best equipped force in America's history. Leaders at every level, many of whom are on their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> combat deployments, are using their experience from previous deployments to prepare and train their units well, and US forces in Iraq remain disciplined, spirited, and adaptable in the face of challenging, ever-changing battlefield conditions.

**Have you observed any significant trends in apparent gaps with respect to personnel, equipment, or training readiness in units' upon arrival in theater?**

There are not currently any significant gaps in the readiness of units as they arrive in Iraq. The equipment and training they receive in preparation for deployment are excellent. As in all counterinsurgency operations, though, tactics—both those of the enemy and our own—constantly change, and the winning side is generally that which learns faster. We have strived to be a learning organization and have adapted well in the past; with Congress's support, for example, we have effectively employed increasing ISR capability and fielded MRAPs to protect our forces from increasingly lethal IEDs. We have also worked to push lessons learned back to units so they can integrate them into their training. As enemy tactics evolve and new equipment and training requirements arise, I would see it as my responsibility to address those needs, if I am confirmed.

**What are your views on the growing debate over whether the Army is putting too much emphasis on preparing for counterinsurgency operations or too little emphasis on preparing for high intensity force-on-force conflict?**

Although I understand the concern, I believe that the distinction between the requirements of counterinsurgency and those of high intensity combat can be overstated. Indeed, Army doctrine explains that all operations (including COIN) are a mix of offensive, defensive, and stability and support operations. Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan have performed—and continue to perform—very well in intense combat, gaining new sophistication in the use of fires (increasingly precise) and air-weapons teams, the integration of counterfire radar and unmanned aerial vehicles, the teamwork between conventional and special operations forces, the fusion of intelligence, and the command and control of complex operations. The past year, for example, included significant combat operations to clear Ramadi, Baqubah, various Baghdad neighborhoods, and now Mosul. Beyond that, leaders are explicitly trained and educated in our branch schools in *how* to think rather than *what* to think, and they are more adaptive as a result. The Army is now full of experienced leaders (as are all our Services), and it has shown that it is a learning organization, rapidly institutionalizing lessons learned. Finally, it has a more robustly equipped force, including vehicles that offer better protection, which would serve well in a variety of high intensity conflicts.

**Iraq**

**What is your assessment of the current situation facing the United States in Iraq?**

I believe we are in a significantly better position in Iraq now than we were in late 2006 and early 2007. The security situation is much improved, with overall attacks, civilian deaths, and ethno-sectarian violence all down substantially. The week ending 16 May 2008 had the lowest level of security incidents since the week that ended 23 April 2004. Having noted that, progress is uneven and difficult challenges remain, including Iran's malign involvement in Iraq and the fact that AQI and other Sunni extremists and illegal Shi'a militias retain the ability in some areas to carry out lethal attacks and regenerate. Iraqi Security Forces continue to improve and are increasingly taking the lead. Nonetheless, the gains of the past 15 months remain fragile, and much tough work remains on the security front.

The Iraqi government has begun to make progress on some very difficult issues and has passed some critical legislation. We have seen more unity across sectarian lines at the national level, and this presents opportunities for further political progress. Iraq's governmental capacity is still insufficient in many areas but is improving. Overall, Iraq is moving in the right direction and making progress. However, it will take continued US involvement and commitment to ensure that the gains are not reversed.



**From your perspective, what are the top lessons learned from our experience in Iraq?**

Recent experience in Iraq has shown us the value of pursuing a comprehensive approach in response to complex challenges and of focusing on key counterinsurgency concepts. In Iraq, we operate along multiple lines of operation. Our strategy recognizes that enduring security and stability rest on economic, political, social, and diplomatic, as well as military, efforts and thus require simultaneous pursuit of a variety of kinetic and non-kinetic operations. Our application of a joint USM-I/MNF-I campaign plan has required an immense amount of coordination among governmental departments and agencies and reinforced the lesson that the military cannot accomplish its mission on its own. As an example, we have begun to address the foreign fighter problem in Iraq through a series of video teleconferences in which more than 25 organizations from the interagency, intelligence community, and Department of Defense participate; this forum has allowed key leaders across all agencies and departments to share current assessments and activities and to discuss future plans.

Because of the lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan, we have already seen some progress in interagency cooperation. After 9/11, every regional combatant commander stood up a new doctrinal Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) that was originally focused on counterterrorism operations. Over the past few years, these JIACGs have begun to evolve into interagency enablers for full-spectrum operations. Just this month, CENTCOM formally announced the evolution of its JIACG into an Interagency Task Force for Irregular Warfare to confront the complex challenges of its region. If I am confirmed, I would seek to build on these initiatives as CENTCOM commander.

**What do you consider to be the most significant mistakes the US has made to date in Iraq?**

First, there were a number of assumptions and assessments that did not bear out. Prominent among them was the assumption that Iraqis would remain in their barracks and ministry facilities and resume their functions as soon as interim governmental structures were in place; that obviously did not transpire. The assessment of the Iraqi infrastructure did not capture how fragile and abysmally maintained it was (a challenge compounded, of course, by looting). Additionally, although most Iraqis did, in fact, greet us as liberators (and that was true even in most Sunni Arab areas), there was an underestimation of the degree of resistance that would develop as a Shi'a majority government began to emerge and the Sunni Arabs, especially the "Saddamists," realized that the days of their dominating Iraq were over. Sunni Arab resistance was also fueled by other actions noted below.

A number of other situations did not develop as envisioned, including:

-There was a feeling that elections would enhance the Iraqi sense of nationalism. Instead, the elections hardened sectarian positions, as Iraqis who did vote did so largely

based on ethnic and sectarian group identity; major sections of the population boycotted the political process and thus have been underrepresented ever since.

-There was an underestimation over time of the security challenges in Iraq, particularly in the wake of the 2006 bombing of the mosque in Samarra, coupled with an overestimation of our ability to create new security institutions, in the midst of an insurgency, following the disbandment of the Iraqi security forces.

-It repeatedly took us too much time to recognize changes in the security environment and to react to them. What began as an insurgency gradually evolved into a conflict that included insurgent attacks, terrorism, sectarian violence, and violent crime. Our actions had to evolve in response to these changes, and that was not always easy.

A number of other mistakes were made during the course of Operation Iraqi Freedom, including:

-The very slow execution of the reconciliation components of de-Ba'athification by the Iraqi de-Ba'athification Committee left tens of thousands of former Ba'ath Party members (many of them Sunni Arabs, but also some Shi'a) feeling that they had no future opportunities in, or reason to support, the new Iraq. To be fair to the Coalition Provisional Authority, Ambassador Bremer intended to execute reconciliation (or exceptions to the de-Ba'athification order) and, for example, gave me permission to do so on a trial basis in Ninewa Province; however, when we submitted the results of the reconciliation commission conducted for Mosul University and subsequent requests for exception issued by Iraqi processes with judicial oversight, no action was taken on them by the Iraqi de-Ba'athification Committee in Baghdad. As realization set in among those affected that there was to be no reconciliation, we could feel support for the new Iraq ebbing in Sunni Arab majority areas.

-Disbanding the Iraqi Army without simultaneously announcing a stipend and pension program, a plan for Iraq's future security forces, and ways to join those future forces left hundreds of thousands of Iraqi men angry, feeling disrespected, and worried about how they would feed their families. The stipend plan eventually announced did help, but it did not cover senior officers, who then remained influential critics of the new Iraq. This action likely helped fuel the early growth of anti-Coalition sentiment and of the insurgency.

-We took too long to develop the concepts and structures needed to build effective Iraqi security forces to assist in providing security for the Iraqi people.

-Misconduct at Abu Ghraib and in other less sensational, but still damaging, cases inflamed the insurgency and damaged the credibility of Coalition Forces in Iraq, in the region, and around the world.

-We had, for the first 15 months or more in Iraq, an inadequate military headquarters structure. In hindsight, it is clear that it took too long to transform V Corps HQs into

CJTF-7 HQs and that even after that transformation the HQs was not capable of looking both up and down (e.g., performing both political-military and strategic functions and also serving as the senior operational HQ for counterinsurgency and stability operations). The result was the eventual creation of the MNF-I HQs. Moreover, it is clear that we should have built what eventually became MNSTC-I HQs and TF134 HQs (which oversees detainee/interrogation operations) and other organizations (e.g., the Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division HQs) much sooner.

-Although it was not a problem in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division AOR during my time as the 101<sup>st</sup> Cdr, it is clear that in certain AORs there were more tasks than troops—especially in Anbar Province during at least the first year of operations.

-Finally, the effort in the wake of the al-Askariya Mosque bombing in Samarra in February 2006 was unable to stem the spiraling ethno-sectarian violence. Repeated operations in Baghdad in the summer and fall of 2006, in particular, did not prove durable due to a lack of sufficient Iraqi and Coalition Forces for the hold phase of clear-hold-build operations.

### **Which of these do you believe are still having an impact?**

Although it is difficult after five years of developments in Iraq to attribute specific current challenges to particular past activities, it is likely that we are still feeling the effects of many of these activities. For instance, groups that chose not to participate in Iraq's 2005 elections are still underrepresented in government at the provincial and national levels. For this reason, free and fair provincial elections this year will be very important in pulling an increasing proportion of Iraqi society into the political process.

### **What do you believe are the most important steps that the United States needs to take in Iraq?**

As US forces in theater draw down, our most important steps are those that protect the Iraqi people while continuing to build Iraqi capability and capacity. Even as we assist in providing security, we must also enable Iraqi Security Forces increasingly to assume the lead in securing their country. We must work to help the Iraqis expand their governmental capability and capacity. We must encourage and support political accommodation and reconciliation at both the local and national level. Finally, we must recognize that the challenges associated with internal and external stability and security in Iraq cannot be solved solely in Iraq. We must thus continue to engage with Iraq's neighbors and seek to get these neighbors to support political compromise and stability in Iraq.

### **How has the threat and conduct of intercommunal violence changed the fundamental nature of the conflict in Iraq?**

Since liberation in 2003, the conflict in Iraq has been a competition among ethnic and sectarian communities for power and resources. While the fundamental nature of this

struggle has not changed, it has played out differently over time. Over the past year, we have seen a significant decrease in ethno-sectarian violence. However, as overall violence levels have decreased, continuing challenges in the area of intra-sectarian conflict have risen to the fore. Iraq continues to face a complex array of destabilizing forces, including terrorism and regional interference; however, as noted earlier, the level of security incidents in the past week was the lowest in over four years.

**How would you recommend that military strategy adapt to this change in the nature of the conflict?**

I believe our strategy in Iraq is well-suited to address this conflict over power and resources. As commander of MNF-I, I participated in the development of the Joint Campaign Plan with the U.S. Ambassador in Baghdad. This plan lays out a comprehensive approach, along security, economic, diplomatic, and political lines of operation, to achieve the aim of an independent, stable, and secure Iraq. Although there is a long way to go, our strategy to address the conflict in Iraq is achieving progress.

**What is the appropriate role of coalition forces in response to the threat and conduct of intercommunal violence among militant groups vying for control, particularly in southern Iraq?**

Coalition Forces support the elected government and help that government enforce its monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Iraqi leaders have largely united around the aim of disarming all militias, and we seek to support them in that effort.

**What role, if any, did you play in the development of the new Iraq strategy announced by the President in January 2007?**

The day after Secretary Gates took office, immediately before his first trip to Iraq, I met with him to discuss the situation in Iraq. We talked again subsequent to his trip. I also talked to the CJCS several times during that period, noting that an emphasis on population security, particularly in Baghdad, was necessary to help the Iraqis gain the time and space for the tough decisions they faced and also contributing my input on the general force levels likely to be required. As the strategy was refined, I talked on several occasions to LTG Ray Odierno to confirm that his troop-to-task analysis required the force levels called for by the new strategy; I relayed my support for those levels to the CJCS and the Secretary. I also supported the strategy's additional emphasis on the advisory effort and additional resources for the reconstruction effort (both in terms of funding and personnel for Provincial Reconstruction Teams and governmental ministry capacity development).

**Do you believe that there is a purely military solution in Iraq, or must the solution be primarily a political one?**

There is no purely military or purely political solution in Iraq. All four lines of operation—security, economic, diplomatic, and political—are mutually reinforcing and thus must be pursued to achieve a long-term solution in Iraq. Though the pursuit of political reconciliation and good governance along the political line of operation is the main effort, success in this area depends on security conditions that enable and foster compromise. Enduring domestic political progress will also rest on supporting economic and diplomatic developments.

**Do you believe that political compromise among Iraqi political leaders is a necessary condition for a political solution?**

Yes.

**What do you believe will induce Iraqi political leaders to make the political compromises necessary for a political solution?**

Iraq leaders have put themselves under enormous personal pressure and are also under the collective pressure of various political elements in Iraq to create stability and long-term solutions for Iraq. Indeed, they have already worked together and compromised on a number of difficult issues in order to pass important pieces of legislation earlier this year. They recognize that in order to succeed in a political process, they will need to produce results, and producing results requires compromise. With regard to expectations about the pace of progress, it is important to recognize that Iraq's political leaders are still struggling with fundamental questions such as the degree of devolution to the provinces of various authorities and powers in Iraq. Iraq's political leaders have already begun to make progress in these areas, and they are continuing to move forward on issues such as the provincial elections scheduled for later this year.

**What leverage does the US have in this regard?**

Although US forces and reconstruction funding are being reduced, the US still has considerable leverage and influence in the form of US forces, the large US diplomatic presence, and the comprehensive effort to increase governmental capacity. Having said that, Iraq is a sovereign country and, understandably, its leaders seek to exercise that sovereignty—and we seek to encourage that. Beyond that, supporting political solutions in Iraq is not purely a matter of leverage and convincing Iraqi leaders of the importance of compromise. It is also a matter of helping Iraqi leaders to set conditions that enable progress. There again, our leverage lies in our robust engagement, working with the government of Iraq, and helping its leaders to make and implement the hard decisions that are in the best interests of all the Iraqi people.

**To your knowledge, aren't conditions on the ground in Iraq being continuously assessed?**

Yes.

**If so, why is it necessary, in your view, to wait 45 days to assess the conditions on the ground and determine when to make recommendations?**

The withdrawal of over one-quarter of our combat power from Iraq will significantly reshape the battlefield. Our goal is to thin out our presence, not simply withdraw from areas, to ensure we help the ISF hold the security gains we have achieved together and set the conditions for additional progress. A period of 45 days will enable us to reposture our forces, if needed, evaluate the effect of required adjustments, and avoid premature judgments about the impact of these changes. After this period of consolidation and evaluation, we can then complete an informed assessment and make appropriate recommendations.

**In your view, what conditions on the ground in Iraq would allow for a recommendation that further reductions be made in US forces?**

There is no simple metric or equation that can be used to determine the appropriate pace of force reductions. A number of variables are examined as we conduct assessments. Reductions are not merely a question of battlefield geometry; they involve complex political and military calculus. We look primarily at security and local governance conditions—at the enemy situation and the capability of Iraqi Security Forces, at the capacity of local officials, and at a host of other factors. And, though we have metrics to assist in assessing the situation in various locations, in many cases it is the commander on the ground who has the best feel for the situation; it is as much art as it is science.

**In the fiscal year 2008 defense authorization and appropriation acts Congress prohibited the use of funds to seek permanent bases in Iraq or to control the oil resources of Iraq.**

**Do you agree that it is not and should not be the policy of the United States to seek permanent basing of US forces in Iraq or to exercise control over Iraq's oil resources?**

Yes.

**If you agree, what are your views on the construction of any additional facilities inside Iraq for use by our military forces?**

As is currently the case in Iraq, construction efforts should be focused on supporting the counterinsurgency concept of living among the people rather than on the expansion of large operating bases. Toward this end, we continue to complete some Joint Security

Station and Combat Outpost facilities that are necessary for current missions—though the vast majority of these facilities have already been completed. Over time, a few headquarters may be shifted as well, and this may require a few facility changes. Much of our future effort will, however, be focused on reducing the size of our facilities. As we continue to withdraw forces, we will follow a “shrink and share” strategy that reduces base perimeters and maximizes opportunities to share bases with ISF and government of Iraq users. Eventually, these facilities will either be transferred to the government of Iraq or closed.

**What are your views on the responsibility and ability of the Iraqi government to assume greater responsibility for paying the costs of reconstruction and security activities throughout Iraq, including paying for all large-scale infrastructure projects; the costs of combined operations between Iraqi and MNF-I forces; the costs of training and equipping of the Iraqi Security Forces; and the costs associated with the Sons of Iraq?**

The government of Iraq has an increasing responsibility and an increasing ability to fund reconstruction and security operations in Iraq, and it is making progress in picking up a greater share of the load. As Ambassador Crocker recently stated before Congress, “The era of US-funded major infrastructure projects is over.” Instead, we are focusing our efforts on helping build Iraqi governmental capacity so that Iraqis can better leverage their own resources. For example, Iraq’s 2008 budget contains \$13 billion for reconstruction; beyond that, we anticipate Iraq will spend over \$8 billion on security this year and \$11 billion next year, and a supplemental Iraqi budget is in the works. An important limiting factor is Iraqi governmental capacity, but this is gradually improving as well, as evidenced by a solid increase in budget execution last year.

**What are your views on the concept circulated over the last year that would make Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan a Marine Corps mission and end the rotation of Marine units in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom?**

In my current position in Iraq, I have not been a part of the discussions surrounding this issue (other than those related to its impact in Iraq). If I am confirmed, it is an issue I will discuss with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commanders in Afghanistan.

### **Confronting the Militias**

**Based on your knowledge, is the Iraqi government taking the steps it must to confront and control the militias? What role would you expect to play on this issue, if confirmed?**

The Iraqi government has taken some critical steps in recent months to confront criminal militias. Prime Minister Maliki made the decision in March to confront militia elements in Basra that were carrying out violent crimes and mafia-like activities. That operation is still ongoing, but Iraqi Security Forces have made impressive progress in

improving security conditions in Basra's neighborhoods as well as in the strategic Port of Umm Qasr and in other areas in Basra Province.

The government's success in Basra has also led to a greater degree of unity among Iraqi leaders regarding the issue of armed militias. PM Maliki has become vocal in his stance that the government of Iraq must have a monopoly on the legitimate use of force (an issue on which a public statement of backing was issued by Grand Ayatollah Sistani), and the government and ISF have worked to enforce this point in Baghdad, particularly in Sadr City. In general, the government has been more willing to use its forces to confront militia elements, but it also realizes that the militia issue cannot be addressed with a purely military solution. In an effort to win popular support, Iraqi leaders have actively pursued humanitarian assistance efforts in areas affected by militia violence and have reached out to tribal and political leaders as well.

There is obviously a long way to go in reducing militia violence, but there does seem to be positive momentum toward addressing these difficult issues and drawing dissident factions into the political process. If confirmed, I would continue to support the MNF-I Commander's efforts to partner with the Iraqi government to combat these militias. In addition, I would seek to assist with regional engagement efforts to dissuade Iran and Syria from fostering violence and instability in Iraq and seek to encourage Iraq's Arab neighbors to play a more constructive role.

**What has been the role of American troops with respect to operations in and around Sadr City and in Basra?**

US support for the Sadr City and Basra operations has been generally in line with the support Coalition Forces regularly provide to Iraqi operations.

In Basra, working in coordination with the UK contingent in Multi-National Division—Southeast, we continue to support Iraqi-led operations with planning, logistics, close air support, intelligence, and embedded transition teams. These efforts are typical of our role in provinces transitioned to Iraqi control, where Iraqi forces plan and execute operations and are supported by specific Coalition enablers.

Because Baghdad is not yet transitioned to Provincial Iraqi Control, US forces are playing a more robust role in planning and executing operations in the Baghdad Security Districts than they are in Basra. We are conducting extensive surveillance operations in Sadr City and partnering with Iraqi units on the ground. Using intelligence elements, ground forces, and air weapons teams, US forces also conducted very targeted operations in response to attacks originating in Sadr City. As is typical in the "partner" phase of the lead-partner-overwatch transition to ISF control, Coalition forces operate alongside and in coordination with Iraqi Army, special operations, and police units.



**What is your assessment of the Iraqi government and security forces' strategic and operational planning and preparation for the operation in Basra?**

Iraqi operations in Basra were launched more quickly than was originally planned and were hampered initially by incomplete planning and conditions-setting. As operations have continued, we have seen steady growth in ISF planning capability, and recent operations have been impressive.

Once the hasty initial planning issues were resolved, Iraq Security Forces demonstrated impressive growth in operational capability, and it is notable that, on short notice, they were able to deploy over a division's worth of personnel and equipment to Basra from across the country and to quickly employ them upon arrival—a feat which certainly would not have been possible one year ago.

**What is your assessment of Iraqi security forces' tactical performance during operations in Basra?**

As operations in Basra began, performance of the ISF was uneven, with some units performing quite well and others performing poorly. However, the Iraqi government reacted aggressively to shortcomings identified in early operations and quickly removed underperforming leaders and troopers and flew in replacements. Many of the units—such as a brigade of the 14<sup>th</sup> Iraqi Army Division—that originally performed poorly have already been retrained and are back in the fight as operations in Basra continue, though progress with reconstituting police elements that performed inadequately has been slower.

As I noted above, performance of the ISF has improved over the course of the ongoing operation in Basra. The ISF have, for several weeks now, been conducting orderly clear-hold-build operations incrementally through the city and outside the city with sound tactical planning and execution. They have, for example, captured weapons caches that total over 2800 mortar and artillery rounds, nearly 700 rockets, 1300 rocket propelled grenades, 21 surface-to-air missiles, and over 500 mines, bombs, and improvised explosive devices.

**In your view, did this operation accomplish the Iraqi government's strategic and the Iraqi security forces' operational objectives?**

Operations in Basra City and Province are still ongoing; however, they do appear to have achieved the Iraqi government's military objectives, strategically as well as operationally. The accomplishments to date have been impressive and have bolstered Prime Minister Maliki's standing with various political elements. The ISF have made significant progress in eliminating the militia's grip on Basra's neighborhoods, and they have cleared numerous huge caches throughout the city. The operation seems to be garnering support from Basrawi citizens and has already had positive effects on Iraqi

political unity. Also, the ISF have successfully detained several militia leaders who returned to Basra after fleeing in the early days of the operation.

### **Accounting for ISF Weapons**

**A July 2007 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that the Multinational Security Transition Command Iraq (MNSTC-I) could not fully account for the receipt by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) of over 190,000 weapons provided by the United States. One of the report's findings is that the lapse in accounting for weapons provided by the United States to the ISF was due to the failure of MNSTC-I to maintain a central record of all equipment distributed from June 2004 to December 2005, including during the period you commanded MNSTC-I.**

**Have you reviewed the July 2007 GAO report on accounting for weapons provided by the United States to the ISF? If so, what is your assessment of the report's findings?**

Yes, I have reviewed the report. Taking into account the caveats listed in the GAO report (including the fact that the GAO review utilized an incomplete sample), I found the findings to be as accurate as they could have been. The security situation in Iraq in 2004-2005 was very challenging, and the priority was to provide arms to Iraqi Security Forces who were preparing to enter the fight. Indeed, members of Congress, DoD, and the administration repeatedly emphasized the need to accelerate the arming and training of the ISF. On several occasions, we had to provide arms to the ISF in the middle of ongoing major combat operations (e.g., Fallujah, Najaf, and Mosul in the fall of 2004). Many of our challenges stemmed from an insufficient number of logistical personnel in the train and equip effort and in the newly formed Iraqi units, and also from the lack of a fully operational distribution networks and property accountability systems across Iraq. Accountability has since been achieved by MNSTC-I for a portion of the weapons assessed as unaccounted for in the GAO report, and the effort to achieve further accountability continues.

**What has been done to address the accountability for weapons provided by the United States in the course of training and equipping the ISF? What additional steps, if any, are needed to improve accountability for these weapons?**

Accountability procedures have been significantly improved. We have worked to establish an unbroken chain of custody for the accountability and control of munitions under US control from entry into Iraq to issuance to the ISF. We have increased the number of logistics and property accountability specialists in country (in MNSTC-I, in particular) and increased security procedures throughout the chain of custody. We have also worked with the ISF to build their property accountability systems and structures. In July 2007, we partnered with the ISF to establish an M-16 Biometrics Program that links individual soldiers to the particular weapons they are issued. Prior to

weapons issue, each soldier is required to provide biometric data in the form of a retinal scan, a voice scan, and fingerprints. In addition, soldiers' personnel and payroll data are verified before a weapon is issued. The final step in the process is to take a picture of each soldier holding his new weapon with the serial number visible. Similar biometric procedures have been implemented for Iraqi police badge and weapon issue, as well. The fidelity of data and level of detail captured in these accountability procedures are significant. Even as we continue these important initiatives, we must plan for future transitions by ensuring that the ISF can adequately provide security and accountability at key logistics hubs as they assume responsibility for these facilities.

### **Sustainment of US Commitment**

**Based on your knowledge of the Army and its state of readiness, how long do you believe the Army can sustain US troop levels in Iraq of approximately 140,000 troops at their current operational tempo?**

There is clearly strain on the Active and Reserve Components. Many Soldiers have completed or are in the midst of second or third deployments. This is obviously difficult for them and their families. My own family is well acquainted with this challenge, as I have now been deployed for more than four and a half years since 2001. Reset of equipment also remains a challenge. Having said that, it is more appropriate for the Joint Staff and the Services to determine how long we can sustain given troop levels, though the Army Chief of Staff has said the Army can maintain a 15-Brigade Combat Team level in Iraq and Afghanistan—i.e., the post-surge level. As CENTCOM commander, it would be beyond my brief to determine the overall health of the Army and Marine Corps, though it would be something about which I would be very concerned and on which I would have dialogue with the Service Chiefs. These concerns are somewhat allayed by the ongoing effort to increase the end strength of the Army and Marine Corps and by the ongoing reduction of forces in Iraq. Clearly, the conflict in Iraq (and Afghanistan) has been hard on our ground forces, and I am grateful for Secretary Gates' efforts and Congress' support to ensure we have the forces we need for what are very frequently people-intensive operations.

### **Counterinsurgency Doctrine**

**According to Field Manual 3-24, the new counterinsurgency manual, "twenty [soldiers or police forces] per 1000 residents is often considered the minimum troop density required for effective counterinsurgency operations." Baghdad alone, according to doctrine, requires a force of 120,000 - 130,000 personnel to meet the minimum requirement. However, the planned increase in US and Iraqi forces for Baghdad only provided for about 80,000 security forces.**

**Do you believe that 80,000 US and Iraqi troops has been and remains sufficient and if so, why?**

First, the recommended force ratio is a “rule of thumb” distilled for simplicity’s sake from numerous complex cases of counterinsurgency operations. These cases may differ significantly in terms of geography, urbanization, or enemy strength. As with many aspects of counterinsurgency, this is an art, not a science.

Having said that, troop levels in Baghdad have been sufficient. Counterinsurgency doctrine clearly states that host nation police and army forces are a key part of the equation, as are special operating forces and other security elements. Added to those, the thousands of ministry security forces and similarly large numbers of civilian (often third party) contracted guard forces protecting key sites in Baghdad contribute to security in the capital city. In addition, nearly 30,000 Sons of Iraq are currently contracted to help provide security in the Baghdad area. Taking into account these additional security forces in Baghdad, the force ratio is sufficient; significantly increased security in Baghdad over the last year bears out this analysis.

**What is your understanding of the status and adequacy of the risk assessment and mitigation plan associated with this deviation from doctrine?**

Risk assessment and planning to mitigate risk occur on a continuous basis in Iraq. As operations in Iraq are considered and undertaken, commanders consider the risk to our own forces as well as Iraqi forces, as well as the risk of thinning our lines in areas that we currently hold.

**Afghanistan**

**What is your assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan and the nature, size, and scope of the anti-government insurgency?**

I have not had the opportunity to personally assess the security situation in Afghanistan since 2005. However, the Afghan government and the Coalition clearly face a resilient enemy that seeks to force withdrawal of the international coalition, to overthrow the country’s legitimate government, and to turn Afghanistan into a safe haven for terrorists once again.

**The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mullen, has repeatedly called our military operations in Afghanistan an “economy of force” operation and said that there are requirements in Afghanistan that cannot be filled and likely won’t be filled until conditions improve in Iraq.**

**Do you agree with Admiral Mullen that requirements in Afghanistan are going unfilled?**

Yes.

**Do you agree that these requirements are unlikely to be met until conditions improve in Iraq?**

There are several ways to meet the requirements in Afghanistan, including increasing NATO contributions and increasing the capability and capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces. But clearly a reduction of US and Coalition forces in Iraq will make available forces that could help meet the need in Afghanistan.

**If confirmed as Commander, US Central Command, how would you intend to balance the requirements of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan?**

In consultation with the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense, I would, if confirmed, work to ensure that CENTCOM's force posture remains consistent with national priorities, with force levels and resources reflecting those priorities. It would be my responsibility to make clear the resources necessary to achieve the national policy goals and objectives; I would also intend to make clear how and to what extent shortfalls in resources produce risk to the force or mission objectives.

**If additional troops and equipment are withdrawn from Iraq, do you believe that some of those resources should go to enhance military operations in Afghanistan?**

Yes; in fact, that has already been the case, with additional Marine forces being provided to Afghanistan some months after the Marine Expeditionary Unit was withdrawn from Iraq.

**In your view, what additional military or other assistance is required to ensure the transition of Afghanistan to a stable, democratic, and economically viable nation?**

I would rely on the commanders on the ground in Afghanistan to determine their requirements; we would then analyze and determine how best to resource those requirements. Ultimately, resolution of Afghanistan's complex and diverse challenges will require more than just a military solution, though security activities provide an essential foundation for enduring economic and political solutions. Coalition forces in Afghanistan already work alongside civilians on issues such as counter-narcotics, economic development, border enforcement, and training of the Afghan Police. More such whole-of-government efforts are likely to be essential in the future.

**What is your assessment of efforts to train and equip the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police? What changes, if any, would you recommend for this mission?**

I have not had the opportunity to assess our progress in training and equipping the Afghan National Security Forces since 2005. If confirmed, I will work with MG Cone and the Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan (CSTC-A) to evaluate our efforts in this critical area and to determine what changes to the mission, if any, are required.

**What needs to be done to address concerns voiced by President Karzai and others regarding the number of civilian casualties in Afghanistan?**

The death of innocent civilians in wartime is a tragedy. The welfare of the civilian population is a critical concern, not only from a humanitarian perspective but also from a mission perspective. Indeed, COIN doctrine highlights the importance of protecting the population as part of the key effort to win over the people, convince them of the government's legitimacy, and provide for their welfare. Based on conversations with GEN McNeill, it is clear that Coalition forces in Afghanistan take this concern very seriously and employ all possible means to limit the effect of violence on the civilian population. Efforts to minimize civilian casualties clearly must continue to be given high priority in Afghanistan and our other operational areas.

**Are there additional steps that need to be taken?**

I am not sufficiently familiar with the systems and procedures in place in Afghanistan to be able to recommend at this time specific steps to be taken. Our near-term responsibility includes protecting the civilian population from insurgents and terrorists and also limiting the adverse effects of our military operations on the civilian population. It is important to keep sight of the fact that minimizing civilian casualties can be a very difficult endeavor, as we face an enemy who deliberately places innocents in harm's way. But it is an endeavor we must emphasize.

**Afghanistan is in CENTCOM's area of responsibility (AOR). US European Command, however, oversees the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.**

**In your view, does this "seam" present any problems for the coordination and effectiveness of the NATO ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom missions in Afghanistan?**

All seams present challenges for commanders, and I am sure this seam presents coordination challenges in a variety of areas such as security operations, reconstruction, economic development, and counter-narcotics efforts. If I am confirmed, one of my priorities would be to enhance coordination and cooperation between

CENTCOM, EUCOM, and ISAF in order to ensure the greatest possible unity of effort on the ground in Afghanistan.

### **Al Qaeda and Associated Groups**

**Within the CENTCOM area of responsibility, where do you consider the greatest terrorist threats from Al Qaeda and associated groups to be located?**

The greatest threats from al Qaeda (AQ) in the CENTCOM area of responsibility are in Iraq and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan. The AQ threat in Iraq is important because Iraq is where AQ has chosen to achieve its fundamental objective of establishing an Islamic state in the heart of the Arab world. AQ in the FATA is a critical concern because AQ's senior leadership is located there, exerts malign influence against our operations in Afghanistan from there, and prepares for future global attacks from there. Another area of growing concern is the Levant, where AQ is attempting to increase its presence, particularly as Iraq and Saudi Arabia have proven increasingly inhospitable to AQ activities. There are additional such efforts in Yemen and the Horn of Africa.

**Which of these threats do you believe constitute the highest priority for efforts to counter Al Qaeda's influence and eliminate safe havens for Al Qaeda and affiliated groups?**

Defeat of Al Qaeda is a priority for the United States. Because AQ is a global, distributed terrorist network that is interlinked, we cannot attempt to address individual portions of the network and expect to have a major operational or strategic impact against it. This requires a comprehensive approach that is appropriately balanced and tailored to address specific threats. Clearly, however, the threats posed by the AQ leadership and elements in the FATA and by those in Iraq must rank at the top of the list.

### **Pakistan**

**What is your assessment of the current status of US-Pakistan military cooperation?**

My understanding is that military cooperation between the US and Pakistan has been robust since 9/11. This cooperation includes Foreign Military Sales, military-to-military assistance in training and advising, and border enforcement efforts. The new Pakistani Chief of Army Staff General Kayani (a US Army CGSC graduate) has instituted several positive military reforms and sought constructive engagement with the US military. These are all initiatives I would seek to support and further if I am confirmed.

**Press reports indicate that incursions across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border have increased in recent weeks as the government of Pakistan seeks to negotiate a peace agreement with militants in the border region.**

**What is your assessment of the level of cooperation the United States has received from Pakistan in the war on terrorism?**

On the issue of terrorism, the US and Pakistan have mutual concerns and goals. Recognizing the threat posed by terrorism, the government of Pakistan strongly supported US activities in the region following the attacks of 9/11. Pakistan supported, and continues to support, our mission in Afghanistan by allowing the flow of logistical support through Pakistan into Afghanistan. The government has also in the past demonstrated a willingness to pursue wanted terrorists within its borders.

Recent events in Pakistan seem to indicate a modification of the government's approach to combating terrorism. The newly elected government, seeking to address the ongoing problem of extremism and terrorism in its borderlands, recently negotiated with extremists in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and subsequently began thinning out its forces in the region. This appears to be a change in methodology rather than in cooperation. The new Pakistani government is trying to determine the best way to address the longstanding problem of control over its western areas and is trying to develop a political solution. While it is true that a purely military approach would likely not be successful, it is also unlikely that a purely political approach would have the desired effect—as demonstrated by what is generally assessed to be the failure of the negotiated 'permanent peace' in Waziristan in 2006.

**What more can be done to prevent cross border incursions by the Taliban and Al Qaeda from Pakistan into Afghanistan?**

This is a complicated problem that likely requires a comprehensive solution. Aspects of that solution might include: strengthening the ANSF to assist Afghanistan in securing its borders; working with Pakistan to further increase coordination of border enforcement efforts; and strengthening the capacity of the Pakistani Army and the Frontier Corps—and willingness of the Pakistani government—to control and disarm militants in the borderlands. Any long-term solution must also address the root causes of terrorism's growth in Pakistan and must include initiatives to increase economic and educational opportunity in the generally poor and isolated communities of the region.

**In your view, should the government of Pakistan be doing more to prevent these cross-border incursions?**

Certainly increased and more effective efforts by the Pakistani government to control the border would be helpful to our interests and Coalition activities in Afghanistan, and we are working with Islamabad to strengthen its capability to do so. The danger posed by extremists in the FATA, though, is not limited to the threat to our troops and interests in Afghanistan. FATA extremists also pose a serious threat to Pakistan itself. Beyond



that, an even more serious and enduring problem is that AQ leadership will continue to use the safe haven provided by Pakistan's borderlands to plan and prepare global terrorist attacks. Our assistance to Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts must also address this important issue and, as mentioned above, be comprehensive.

**What more can be done to eliminate safe havens for violent extremists in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and the North West Frontier Province?**

The US government needs to develop a comprehensive approach, in coordination with other countries, to support Government of Pakistan efforts to eliminate extremist sanctuaries in the FATA and Northwest Frontier Province. Based on our experiences in Iraq, it seems clear that resolution of the challenges emanating from these areas cannot be achieved by application of military force alone—though the security component is critical. Rather, resolution demands a strategy grounded in proven counterinsurgency practices that is adequately resourced, tailored to the Pakistani operating environment, and focused on producing an enduring political solution. At the end of the day, however, the challenges posed by the FATA can only be resolved by Pakistani initiatives, albeit with support from the US and other partners.

**What role do you believe US forces should play?**

The role of US military forces in the FATA will undoubtedly be a topic of discussion between the US and Pakistan. Before speculating on what roles US forces should play, I would want to discuss the situation with Pakistani and US leaders. My understanding at this point is that Pakistani leaders understandably are reluctant to see non-Pakistani military elements employed in the FATA.

**What is your assessment of the current situation with regard to Pakistani-Indian relations?**

Lingering tensions between Pakistan and India provide cause for concern. At various times since the establishment of Pakistan, open war, insurgency, and terrorism have marked their relations. The unresolved dispute over Kashmir, regional terrorism, the possibility of crisis escalation, and preparations by the armed forces on each side for major war have all fueled mistrust and suspicion. Naturally, the situation has often precluded Pakistani leaders from focusing more attention on the challenge in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and the Northwest Frontier Province. Recently, however, we have seen some indications of improved political and economic relations between the two countries, as they have been cooperating on cross-border commerce and transportation, border control safeguards, and governmental procedures to ease cross-border friction. In addition, shortages of a viable electrical energy supply in the region have led to several conferences and meetings among regional leaders to discuss solutions to a looming energy crisis.

## **Iran**

### **What in your assessment are Iran's goals with respect to Iraq's stability and security?**

Based on Iranian interference in Iraq, it appears that Iran seeks a Shi'a Iraqi government that is not only friendly to Iran but is subject to the Iranian influence that derives not just from political, economic, and social ties, but also from the presence in Iraq of Iranian trained, funded, equipped, and directed militia forces. Iranian activities also seem aimed at producing just enough instability to keep the government of Iraq weak. Ambassador Crocker has assessed that Iran has sought to "Lebanonize" Iraq, and there are many indicators that support that assessment.

### **What options are available to the United States and its allies for influencing Iran's activities towards Iraq?**

There are a number of diplomatic, economic, and military options available to the US and its allies. On the diplomatic front, we will continue to expose the extent of Iran's malign activities in Iraq in order to build regional and international consensus against Iran's actions. We also seek to fully inform Iraqis of the nature and extent of the Iranian threat to Iraqi national interests, as official Iraqi condemnation of malign Iranian activities in Iraq sends a powerful signal to Tehran and encourages normal statecraft and relations between the two countries. In addition, we will continue to encourage a substantive show of support for Iraq by regional states, which would be an important counterbalance to Iranian influence in Iraq. This support could include further debt relief for Iraq and the reestablishment of normal diplomatic relations through an exchange of ambassadors with Baghdad. On the economic front, we could seek international support for sanctions, to include travel restrictions, against the Iranian regime for the malign activities of the Qods Force and Iranian intelligence services. On the military front, we will continue to target and expose Iranian malign actors and extremist surrogates operating in Iraq and taking actions—often lethal—against Iraqi and Coalition interests.

### **What in your view are Iran's goals in the region?**

Iran seeks to guarantee the survival of its regime and, it appears, to establish a degree of Iranian hegemony over the northern Gulf and also Iranian influence in various states in the region through the use of surrogate militias. The presence of US and Coalition forces in the Gulf, Iraq, and Afghanistan provides a significant counter to Iranian aspirations. To pursue its strategic objectives, Iran is enhancing its ability to project its military power, primarily with ballistic missiles and naval power, with the goal of intimidating the Gulf states and deterring any potential attack on the Iranian regime. In addition to employment of such conventional means, Iran also appears to want to exert its influence throughout the broader region by pursuing a nuclear capability and by supporting terrorist proxies and surrogates in the Palestinian territories, southern Lebanon, Iraq, and western Afghanistan.

**What options do you believe are available to the United States to counter Iran's growing influence in the region?**

Our efforts in regard to Iran must involve generating international cooperation and building regional consensus to counter malign Iranian influence and destabilizing activities, while also striving to promote more constructive engagement, if that is possible. We have strong alliances and partnerships in the Gulf and throughout the broader region upon which we can build a common cause that may help dissuade Iran from its subversive activities and encourage legitimate statecraft and economic interchange. At the same time, we should continue to work with the international community to demonstrate to Iran that there are consequences for its illegitimate influence in the region, especially for the destabilizing actions of the Qods Force and Iranian intelligence services.

In addressing these issues, we should make every effort to engage by use of the whole of government, developing further leverage rather than simply targeting discrete threats. As noted earlier, one particular lever may be the ongoing international diplomatic and economic pressure on Iran to end its nuclear program; such pressure seems to be affecting the Iranian energy market and may convince Tehran to focus on longer-term, less malign interests. A destabilized Iraq, rampant terrorism in the region, and a nuclear armed Middle East are in not in any nation's long-term interest, including Iran's. Along these lines, the international community can reach out to help moderate, pragmatic elements that might influence the internal Iranian debate over Iran's foreign policy and long-term security interests. At the same time, we should retain, as a last resort, the possibility of a range of military actions to counter Iran's activities. As Admiral Mullen has noted, our approach should consist of "using all elements of national power, whether it's economic or financial, international, diplomatic, and not taking any military options off the table."

**Could a protracted deployment of US troops in Iraq strengthen Iran's influence in the region?**

On the contrary, one impact of the US effort in Iraq has been to bring into focus Iran's destabilizing regional impact. The presence of US troops in Iraq and elsewhere in the region has the potential to counter malign Iranian influence against the Government of Iraq, build common cause in the region, and expose the extent of malign Iranian activities to the world.

**Iran is clearly going to remain a significant factor in the CENTCOM AOR. One of the critical objectives for the US in this region is to determine how to achieve a more manageable and stable situation with respect to Iran for the future.**

**How do you believe we could best encourage or achieve a more manageable relationship with Iran in the future?**

The consensus-building, comprehensive approaches described above (two questions previous) are constructive ways to improve relations with Iran. Such approaches would seek to create leverage and make possible constructive engagement in the region.

**Former Soviet Union States**

**Several former Soviet states have played roles in supporting the US and coalition forces in the global war on terrorism.**

**What is your assessment of current US military relationships with these nations, including Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan?**

The military relationship with most of our Central Asian counterparts is good and improving. Soon after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, Uzbekistan offered basing access and overflight rights to the US for operations in Afghanistan. While this particular access ended late in 2005 after the Andijon events, recently there have been modest signs of improvement in the relationship. Since the US left Kharshi-Khanabad Airbase in Uzbekistan, Manas Airbase in Kyrgyzstan has become more important as the remaining northern Central Asia base. The Kyrgyz have been willing to expand and solidify that relationship, and improvements to the infrastructure and capabilities of Manas Airbase continue. Kazakhstan has aggressively pursued strengthening of the bilateral relationship with the US, recently signing a five-year-plan of military cooperation with the US. Turkmenistan's new President Berdimukhammedov continues to allow US humanitarian overflights and refueling operations. Recent gestures toward improving the international investment climate suggest positive development toward possible future bilateral military relationships with Turkmenistan. Tajikistan remains a solid partner, steadfast in its support for coalition operations and willing to expand the relationship.

**What security challenges do you see in this portion of the CENTCOM area of responsibility?**

Central Asian States share our concerns about religious extremism and consider it a threat to regional stability. We are working with partners in the region to improve the collective ability to interdict the movement of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials, and also to exercise control of national borders to counter terrorism and illegal trafficking.

The Central Asia region is relatively stable; however, potential migration of militants from Afghanistan and Pakistan presents a latent threat. Political and economic challenges in some areas provide a potential atmosphere for extremism exploitable by foreign and domestic extremist organizations. Also, the region has become a transit route for human and drug trafficking and is becoming vulnerable to the domestic

consumption of narcotics. Contentious borders fuel tension between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in the Fergana Valley. The Caspian Sea littoral dispute and resultant access to energy fields and fisheries remains unresolved. Finally, water management, which is linked to hydro-electric power, is an ongoing area of contention, as a diminishing Aral Sea, pollution, and irrigation programs threaten shared river resources.

### **Iraqi Refugees**

**The United Nations estimates that over two million Iraqis have been displaced; 1.8 million have fled to surrounding countries, while some 500,000 have vacated their homes for safer areas within Iraq.**

**What is your assessment of the refugee problems in Iraq? Are more Iraqis returning home?**

Refugee and displacement issues remain a serious concern. There are, however, indicators that the situation has begun to improve. According to US Agency for International Development reporting, the rate of displacement of Iraqi citizens has been slowing considerably for at least the last four months, and some Iraqis (in significant numbers in some areas) are returning to their homes. These returns are motivated by a variety of factors, including: improved security in places of origin, deteriorating conditions in places of displacement, increased restrictions in neighboring countries, and tribal reconciliation. It is encouraging that the Iraqi government has begun to give more attention to the problem of Iraqi refugees through the drafting of a national policy on internally displaced persons and a Basic Law for the Ministry of Displacement and Migration.

**What should be the role of the US military in your view, with respect to those Iraqis who are returning to find their homes occupied by others?**

The US military can assist with key leader engagement on this issue and help partner with Iraqis to assist in their development of the governmental capacity needed to handle refugee and IDP returns.

**Beyond working to improve the security environment in Iraq, do you believe that the US military should play a role in addressing this issue?**

While protecting the population and assisting Iraq security forces should be the military's primary roles, the military can also play a role in addressing other concerns associated with internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugee return. Key tasks the military can perform that may help to address this issue include coordinating or executing humanitarian assistance when asked to do so by the Iraqi government (at local as well as national levels) and partnering with provincial reconstruction teams to monitor and track the status of displaced persons and related issues.

**Recent months have seen an increase in kidnappings and murders of non-Muslim religious leaders.**

**In your opinion, are non-Muslim religious minorities in Iraq at significant risk of being the victims of violence as a result of their religious status? Are there any of these groups that are particularly vulnerable?**

There are a number of ethno-sectarian fault lines throughout Iraq, including in Baghdad and some other areas of mixed population. In some of these areas, groups within the population may be local minorities. When tensions are high, these groups (Muslim or non-Muslim) may be at greater risk. In addition, there are a number of smaller minority communities of Christians, Turkmen, Yezedis, etc., throughout Iraq that either are—or perceive themselves to be—in environments in which power and resources are controlled along sectarian lines and where their security is threatened. Attacks on a number of these communities bear out the threats. It is encouraging, however, that the government has devoted greater attention to security in such areas. For example, the murderer of the Chaldean Archbishop Rahho was detained by Iraqi and Coalition forces on 5 March and sentenced to death in an Iraqi trial on 18 May.

**If so, what is the appropriate role for the US military in addressing their vulnerability?**

MNF-I partners with Iraqi government and security force officials, ensuring constant communication and close cooperation on security concerns. This same cooperative approach is important in dealing with all population security concerns.

### **Horn of Africa**

**One of CENTCOM's significant sub-regions is the Horn of Africa. Until a new US African Command is stood up later this year, CENTCOM will continue to be responsible for this region, which will likely experience continued instability and humanitarian crises as demonstrated by recent events in Somalia.**

**What is the strategic importance of this region to the United States?**

US interests in the Horn of Africa include: denying terrorists a sanctuary in which to train, plan, and prepare for attacks; maintaining unimpeded commerce and freedom of the seas as part of a viable global economy; and alleviating humanitarian crises and suffering.

In addition to terrorist activity and simmering humanitarian crises in Somalia and Sudan, there are several challenges to our interests in the region. These include lack of economic development, poorly governed and ungoverned areas, ethnic tensions, and vulnerable strategic maritime choke points.

**Over the last few weeks, the US military has had a very public presence in Somalia.**

**What is your assessment of the situation in Somalia?**

Somalia continues to be a weak and fragile state fraught with violence. Political and security conditions remain precarious as Islamic militants, clan militias, and Al Qaeda-associated factions conduct insurgent activities against Transitional Federal Government (TFG) forces and the Ethiopian and African Union contingents supporting them. The TFG has made little headway in establishing effective ministries and, barring unforeseen circumstances, is unlikely to transition power to a permanent government in the near future. In addition, UN-led reconciliation talks are not expected to lower the level of violence in Somalia.

**What is your understanding of the US government's policy for Somalia and how US military action there supports that policy?**

Current US policy is to support the internationally recognized Transitional Federal Government and its efforts to establish capable ministries and move toward democratic elections. Militarily, our strategy is to contain threats that may emanate from Somalia. As I understand the current national policy, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa engagement within Somalia is not permitted. Presumably, the US retains the right to strike terrorists wherever they operate and deny them sanctuary.

**In your view, where does a stable Somalia fall in our national security priorities and how does the limited availability of ground forces due to competing requirements affect our strategy?**

A stable Somalia would be in the interest of the US and its regional allies. Our current strategy in the Horn of Africa is not limited by the availability of ground forces. We have adopted a low-profile approach focused on working with partners in the region to build their capacity to deal with ungoverned spaces, even as we conduct precision operations against terrorist groups in the region.

### **US Africa Command**

**Over the last year or so, the US Government has mobilized more of its resources to focus on the strategic importance of Africa. The Department of Defense has played an important role through two Combatant Commands – EUCOM via the Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Program and CENTCOM via the creation of the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa.**

**What impact will the transfer of responsibility for operations in the Horn of Africa have on the conduct of anti-terrorism and other operations in that region?**

It is my understanding that CENTCOM has been working closely with AFRICOM, as well as with the Joint Staff, to ensure that the transfer of responsibility for the Horn of Africa is as seamless as possible and causes minimal impact on operations.

**If confirmed, what would you do to ensure a smooth transition and to manage the seams between CENTCOM and the new African Command?**

Extensive coordination for this transition is currently underway. Staffs are currently working several issues, including responsibility for maritime security off the coast of Africa, coordination for activities in Egypt and in Yemen, and provision of uninterrupted intelligence collection and command and control during the transition. AFRICOM and CENTCOM will continue to work together closely following official transfer. As AFRICOM builds capacity, CENTCOM and its components will continue to support AFRICOM and its requirements as necessary.

**Syria**

**In recent weeks, the United States and Israel have publicly disclosed information relating to the September 6, 2007, bombing in northern Syria, and asserted North Korean and Syrian cooperation on nuclear technology. Recent weeks have also seen reporting on ongoing negotiations between Israel and Syria on a peace agreement, similar to those Israel has signed with Egypt and Jordan.**

**In your assessment, what should be our military posture vis-à-vis Syria?**

Our military posture should be an integrated part of a comprehensive strategy. If confirmed, I anticipate that we will conduct a strategy review at CENTCOM, and the posture of our forces will obviously be an important element of that review.

**What is your assessment of the threat posed by Syria to US national security interests in the Middle East?**

Syria has tended to take positive steps when it suits Syrian interests. Syrian activities have generally had a destabilizing effect on security in the region, particularly its continued hosting of groups committed to armed opposition to the legitimate governments of several of its neighbors. As the Syrian regime seeks to maintain its hold on power, it also aims to counter US influence in Lebanon, limit US support of Israel, and increase its influence in the region. Syria's damaging activities include the failure to adequately address foreign fighter flow through Syria into Iraq, the sponsorship of terrorist activities in Lebanon and Israel, and the potential pursuit of a clandestine nuclear program.



**Are there actions the United States could take to encourage a Syrian-Israeli peace agreement? If so, what are they?**

The United States has taken recent steps to encourage a Syrian-Israeli peace agreement, including hosting the Annapolis Conference in late 2007. US leaders have also made recent diplomatic visits to key Arab states to encourage forward movement in the peace process. Unfortunately, Syria's method has been to create leverage in pursuit of its aims by taking actions that destabilize some of its neighbors, including Lebanon and Iraq. Defeating the extremist groups that Syria supports would help create better conditions for the peace process to move forward, as would countering the Syrian regime's anti-US propaganda in the region.

**Israel**

**While Israel is not part of the CENTCOM area of responsibility, it does play an important role in the AOR.**

**In your assessment, what are the most significant threats facing Israel in the Middle East?**

The most significant threats currently facing Israel are a combination of Iranian, Syrian, Lebanese Hezbollah, and Palestinian rejectionists and the proliferation of weapons, technology, and tactics among those elements. Over the past several years, military and political cooperation between Iran and Syria has strengthened. Iran, and to a lesser degree Syria, continue to provide increasingly sophisticated weaponry, equipment, and training to Lebanese Hezbollah, which has likely reconstituted and expanded its weapons stockpiles and capabilities since its summer 2006 conflict with Israel. Additionally, Iran provides training to Palestinian rejectionist groups such as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Damascus continues to harbor the leadership of HAMAS, PIJ, and other affiliated organizations.

**The Iraq Study Group report suggested the most significant hurdle to broader peace in the Middle East was a final status agreement between the Israeli and Palestinian governments.**

**Do you agree with this conclusion of the Iraq Study Group? If not, why not?**

A just and fair agreement that offers peace and security to the Palestinians and Israel would certainly aid the achievement of broader peace in the Middle East and negate the perception of inequity in the Arab world. However, the effort to secure broader peace in the region also must address the challenge of interstate conflicts and extremist movements that are not directly connected to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## **Egypt**

**Egypt has been criticized for its perceived failure to act along the Egypt-Gaza border to counter the smuggling threat posed by cross-border tunnels. Egypt has also played an important role, however, in ensuring peace on the southern border of Israel.**

**What is your assessment of the role Egypt plays with respect to regional stability?**

Egypt is a key leader in regional stability. Their decision three decades ago to break from the Arab bloc that opposed Israel's existence and sign a peace treaty was courageous but unpopular, and it cost them politically and financially for years. Despite being initially ostracized, Egypt stood firm on its peace agreement with Israel and continues to lead the way in seeking regional stability. Egypt is one of the major contributors of peacekeepers to the United Nations African Mission in Darfur and on numerous occasions has provided humanitarian and military assistance to neighboring countries during times of crisis. Egyptian leaders have been and continue to be key mediators between Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, and Israel, and they provide valuable leadership within the Arab League.

**What is your assessment of the US-Egyptian military relationship?**

The US-Egyptian military relationship is very strong. Egyptian forces have long participated in regional combined military exercises, and Egypt is a coalition member of Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan). Since July 2003, it has supplied a field hospital in Bagram, which has treated thousands of patients and provided training to dozens of Afghan doctors. They have also provided tons of humanitarian supplies, ammunition, and weapons to the Afghan National Army. Although Egypt does not directly participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom, it has supported US operations by granting overflight rights and expediting Suez Canal transits. It has also provided training for Iraqi security personnel in Egypt. Additionally, Egypt receives Foreign Military Financing, totaling \$1.3 billion annually; this military assistance has helped Egypt modernize its armed forces and strengthen regional security and stability.

## **Lebanon**

**The United States has played an active role vis-a-vis Lebanon over the last few years, particularly following the war between Israel and Hezbollah. More recently, a US aircraft carrier was ordered to maintain a position off the coast of Lebanon.**

**What are the US national security interests in Lebanon?**

US interests lie in a strong, sovereign, and democratic Lebanese government that has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force inside Lebanon's borders. Such a government

would increase stability along its borders and therefore improve regional stability. We also have an interest in supporting the Lebanese government's efforts to reduce extremist activity, counter malign influence by external actors, and reduce the flow of foreign fighters in the region.

**Given Lebanon's strategic geographic position in the Middle East, in your opinion, what is the appropriate role for CENTCOM in Lebanon?**

As with so many of the region's challenges, the situation in Lebanon is best approached comprehensively, through regional partnership and varied methods. Political and diplomatic methods are already being pursued at the US national level to isolate Syria diplomatically and economically for its actions in Lebanon; Congress passed multiple laws toward this end, and national leaders continue to support UNSCRs and other international efforts to influence Syria's actions. The US has provided military training and assistance to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) in an effort to bolster the government's ability to control violence inside its borders; the LAF is a potential unifying force in the country, given the broad support it enjoys from the population and its multi-ethnic, cross-sectional makeup. Though the relative inaction of the LAF during Lebanon's recent spike in violence raises concerns, these military assistance efforts will likely remain an important part of a comprehensive strategy. The struggle in Lebanon is essentially a competition for power and resources, and progress may lie in political incorporation of disenfranchised elements of the population. If confirmed, I would seek opportunities for CENTCOM to support all of these efforts.

**Saudi Arabia**

**In your assessment what threat does a more regionally assertive Iran, including the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran, pose to Saudi Arabia, and what do you believe to be Saudi Arabia's options should Iran gain a nuclear weapon?**

The interests of Saudi Arabia are certainly threatened by Iranian activities. There is a long history of animosity between these two states; since 1979, Iran has consistently attacked the legitimacy of the Saudi government's custodianship of the Two Holy Mosques. Although the Kingdom maintains diplomatic relations with Iran, a variety of events and activities have convinced the Saudis to be wary of Iran's intentions, including: Iran's military expansion, its nuclear program, and its destabilizing activities throughout the region. Saudi Arabia has expressed an interest in acquiring a peaceful nuclear power program, and there is inevitably the possibility that Saudi Arabia, like other countries in the region, could reevaluate its non-nuclear weapons policy in response to Iran's efforts to acquire a nuclear capability.

**What is your assessment of the US-Saudi military-to-military relationship?  
What are the pluses and minuses of this relationship?**

The US enjoys a strong military-to-military relationship with Saudi Arabia. Cooperation has led to greater interoperability, and a training exchange program results in officers and senior NCOs who have been exposed to US military values, are well trained, and are well-versed in the rule of law. The Kingdom gains increased internal and external security capability through US training, equipment, and information sharing. Finally, US industry and military departments benefit from a robust Foreign Military Sales Program. We understand that there are constraints on this relationship due to regional sensitivities, and we will continue to work through them.

**Ethiopia/Eritrea**

**Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki recently forced the United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea out of Eritrea by cutting off all supplies to the mission. In response to the departure of this mission, both Eritrea and Ethiopia have repositioned their respective militaries in a manner that would seem to indicate that these two countries may reengage one another in military conflict.**

**In your assessment, what threat does a war between Eritrea and Ethiopia pose to the security of the broader Horn of Africa region?**

A war between Ethiopia and Eritrea would likely have a destabilizing effect in the region. If these two nations were to return to war, Ethiopia would divert leadership focus and key assets away from their forces in Somalia. This action could further undermine Somalia's Transitional Federal Government, which is heavily dependent upon Ethiopian military support. Ethiopia would also likely pull out of its pending commitment to provide peacekeeping troops to the Sudan AU/UN Mission in Darfur. Djibouti could also be affected by a return to hostilities in the form of refugees, mostly from Eritrea, who could present local security and humanitarian concerns.

**Maritime security**

**In the past two years, there have been a growing number of pirate attacks off the coast of Somalia – some ending in death and others ending in the payment of ransom. The shipping lanes off the coast of Somalia are some of the most economically and strategically important in the world.**

**In your opinion, what is the most appropriate maritime strategy in this region of the world, given the threats of weapons trafficking, human trafficking, and piracy?**

Piracy off the coast of Africa is a critical issue in the region, in particular because extremist groups often directly participate in and financially benefit from these activities. As with most strategies for this region, the strategy to counter piracy must be

comprehensive. This includes the legal efforts already underway to pass a UN Security Council Resolution to allow international vessels to counter pirates operating within Somalia's territorial waters and to adjust international maritime standards to prevent the registration of "phantom ships." This strategy may also include economic development assistance in nations like Somalia to reduce the draw of illegal activities. And, of course, it involves military maritime cooperation with countries of the region.

### **Iraqi State-Owned Enterprises**

#### **What is your understanding and assessment of the status of DOD efforts to help restart Iraqi state-owned enterprises to increase employment in Iraq?**

Prior to 1991, Iraq was the most industrialized of the Arab States, with a significant base of industrial operations across a wide range of sectors and a highly skilled civilian workforce. From 1991-2003, industry in Iraq was strictly focused on internal production to meet domestic demand as United Nations sanctions prevented export of goods or international economic engagement. Many of these factories shut down immediately after liberation. Coalition efforts to help Iraq revitalize its State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) are led by the OSD Task Force to Improve Business and Stability Operations in Iraq (TF BSO). TF BSO has assisted Iraqi leaders in restoring operations and/or materially increasing production at 56 factories across Iraq. Funded projects, specifically targeted to restart or increase production, range from procurement of raw materials and spare parts to replacement of damaged or obsolete production equipment. Initiatives to revitalize SOEs have resulted in the re-employment of over 100,000 idled or underemployed workers.

In coordination with Iraqi leaders, TF BSO continues its efforts to restart production at Iraqi factories, with specific focus on agriculture and food processing operations and factories in Southern Iraq that had been inaccessible prior to recent military operations. To ensure sustainable results, TF BSO is assisting with the application of standard business investment management practices to the process of allocating new funds to idled or low-production-rate factories. Coalition personnel also instruct factory managers in business plan preparation, marketing strategies, and capital investment plans.

The Iraqi government announced in January the first private investment awards to international consortiums—for three cement factories. Two of these deals, which average over \$100 million each, were finalized in April, and another is still in negotiation. Under the private joint venture arrangement, investors will manage the facility and increase current production levels six-fold, thus creating employment for 5,000 Iraqi workers. These deals represent a modern, profitable business model for investors and for Iraq. In combination with other initiatives focused on private sector development, banking, budget execution, and facilitation of foreign direct investment, these are small but positive steps toward market economy development in Iraq.

The jobs created by the revitalization of SOEs are an important support to Coalition and Iraqi efforts to reduce underemployment; this has a direct impact on security in that it decreases the pool of economically-driven potential recruits for insurgent and extremist elements in Iraq. Revitalization efforts are also an important first step toward future privatization of Iraqi industries.

### **Detainee Treatment Standards**

**Do you agree with the policy set forth in the July 7, 2006 memorandum issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense England stating that all relevant DoD directives, regulations, policies, practices, and procedures must fully comply with Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?**

Yes. The standards outlined in Common Article 3 should be the standard for US and Coalition forces to adhere to in regard to the handling of detainees at all levels. In fact, as commander of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, I directed that detainees would be handled in accordance with the Geneva Convention, as those were the standards our Soldiers understood at the time. Since then, FM 2-22.3 has been published and we adhere to its standards.

**Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated September 5, 2006?**

Yes. I believe having one interrogation standard outlined in one document adds clarity. The FM clearly articulates what is and what is not authorized and effectively identifies methods to ensure accountability.

**Do you share the view of the Judge Advocates General that standards for detainee treatment must be based on the principle of reciprocity, that is, that we must always keep in mind the risk that the manner in which we treat our own detainees may have a direct impact on the manner in which US soldiers, sailors, airmen or marines are treated, should they be captured in future conflicts?**

Yes

**Do you believe it is consistent with effective counterinsurgency operations for US forces to comply fully with the requirements of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions?**

Yes. We can conduct effective interrogation and detention in wartime in a counterinsurgency environment and comply with the requirements outlined in Common Article 3. In fact, in drafting the current Army/Marine counterinsurgency manual, we

ensured human rights organizations participated in discussions and provided input on this issue.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure that US forces in the CENTCOM AOR comply with the standards in the Army Field Manual, the DOD Directive, and applicable requirements of US and international law regarding detention and interrogation operations?**

If confirmed, I would place my personal and command emphasis on ensuring that forces in the CENTCOM AOR fully comply with the letter and spirit of these important standards.

### **Improvised Explosive Devices**

**Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) have proved to be an extremely deadly threat to US troops in Iraq.**

**In your assessment, what threat do IEDs pose to the broader CENTCOM area of responsibility, and what is the most effective way to prevent the spread of these deadly devices?**

Over the past few years, we have witnessed the spread of IED technology throughout the CENTCOM area of responsibility. Though not as prolific as in Iraq and Afghanistan, the IED has become the low cost, weapon of choice of militants and extremist groups in many countries. The most disturbing trend has been the material support and training in the employment of advanced IEDs, known as Explosively Formed Penetrators, provided by Iran. We can expect militant groups to continue to use this technology to advance their goals and to intimidate government forces and local populations.

Countering this threat requires comprehensive action to defeat the networks that produce and employ IEDs, technology and training to detect and render IEDs ineffective, and advanced armor systems to protect our troops.

### **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles**

**CENTCOM has articulated an increasing requirement for additional aircraft with imaging and signals intelligence capabilities. Although recently the Air Force has “surged” a large number of Predator unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to CENTCOM, this surge and other activities will not close the gap between available and required resources. The main problem appears to be that there are bottlenecks in fielding more UAVs in the near future, coupled with a reluctance to seek alternative aircraft to the UAV programs-of-record.**

**Do you believe that small manned aircraft acquired immediately from the commercial sector could provide a practical near-term solution to CENTCOM's intelligence platform shortage?**

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) platforms are essential to our operations. Persistent surveillance is required to identify, track, target, and kill or capture insurgents and minimize civilian casualties.

Small manned aircraft acquired from the commercial sector are, in fact, being employed to help fill the ISR platform shortage, and we will continue to take advantage of such options where they make sense. They are not, however, the complete answer to our ISR shortfalls. Comprehensive solutions are required, and these must take into account the platform's support infrastructure; sensor capabilities; communications bandwidth; and processing, exploitation, and dissemination architectures.

**Are you satisfied that this potential solution has been adequately considered?**

On 18 April, Secretary Gates created an Operational ISR Task Force to tackle the challenge of delivering more ISR to the USCENTCOM Theaters of Operations. Secretary Gates has been a staunch supporter of our ISR requirements, and I am pleased he has taken this step to help meet our ISR needs.

**Special Immigrant Visa Program**

**Section 1059 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year 2006 and section 1241 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2008 authorized a special immigrant visa program for Iraqi translators and interpreters. This program has enabled the Department to aid those Iraqis who have assisted the United States in Iraq.**

**What is your view of the utility of this program?**

While there is a clear need for the Special Immigration Visa Program, we have encountered obstacles in utilizing the program. Our understanding is that the quota under Section 1059 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is nearly filled for fiscal year 2008 and USCIS has stopped scheduling Visa interviews. Furthermore, while Section 1241 of the NDAA for fiscal year 2008 broadened the scope to other Iraqis who are US government employees or contractors, there is not yet implementing guidance, and USCIS is not currently accepting applications. In order to overcome these challenges, we would benefit from Congress affirming the technical instructions agreed upon by the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security so that USCIS can begin accepting applications.

**Is it beneficial for the military to have the ability to recommend certain Iraqis who have worked with us for special immigrant visas?**



Yes, our Iraqi interpreters provide valuable support to coalition operations on a daily basis and often at great risk to themselves and their families. Many interpreters have to relocate their families due to harassment, threats, and even the possibility of death at the hands of extremists because they provide help to the US and our Coalition partners. For those trusted interpreters who are eligible, the special immigrant visa is a useful tool to reward these courageous individuals who risk so much to assist Coalition efforts.

### **Regional Ballistic Missile Threats and Response**

**Iran has hundreds of short- and medium-range ballistic missiles today that are capable of reaching forward-deployed US forces, allies, and other friendly nations in the CENTCOM AOR. Syria also has an inventory of ballistic missiles that pose a threat to the region. A joint capabilities mix study conducted by the Joint Staff for US Strategic Command concluded that the US military needs about twice the number of Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) interceptors as are currently planned to provide even the minimum capability needed by our regional combatant commanders to defend against such existing threats.**

**Do you agree with the conclusion of the joint capabilities mix study that we need to acquire more of these near-term systems to provide our regional combatant commanders with the capability to defend our forward-deployed forces and allies against existing missile threats?**

Yes. These systems are important to counter both the existing threat and that of 2015, upon which the joint capabilities mix study was based.

**Do you agree there is a high priority need in CENTCOM for additional SM-3 and THAAD interceptors to defend against existing short- and medium-range missiles within the AOR?**

Yes. However, THAAD interceptors are not yet fielded, and SM-3-capable platforms (i.e., Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense ships) are limited by the number of available interceptors. Effectively defending our forward-deployed forces and allies against the existing missile threat in the CENTCOM AOR will also require a greater number of Patriot PAC3 interceptors, SM-2 BLK IVs, and SM-3s.

### **Sexual Assault**

**If confirmed, you will be responsible for ensuring compliance with DOD policies on prevention of and response to sexual assaults against military personnel and civilians throughout the CENTCOM area of responsibility.**

**What lessons have Army leaders in Iraq learned regarding sexual assault prevention, response, and reporting protocols that can be applied across the entire US Central Command?**

The prevention of sexual assault is a critical command issue. It is important to have a program that incorporates an awareness campaign that reaches every service member and that provides integrated response services, including medical care, counseling, victim advocacy, chaplain programs, law enforcement (investigation, detainment, etc.), legal measures (prosecution, legal assistance, and victim/witness liaison), reporting processes (assault reporting and data collection), and program assessment. It is widely recognized in today's Services that such a program must receive command emphasis to be effective, and I would continue to give it that emphasis if confirmed as the commander of CENTCOM.

**What are the unique issues that you believe need to be addressed to ensure that prevention, reporting, medical treatment (including mental health care), and victim support are available for military personnel and civilians in the operational environments of Iraq and Afghanistan?**

Some of the most important challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan include combat stress, battlefield dispersion, and a mixed, joint service and civilian population. With regard to the last of these challenges, civilians constitute a considerable percentage of force on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan and are critical contributors to mission success. The availability of response services for DoD civilian and contractor personnel should be similar to the services available to service members. There are jurisdictional, legal, contractual, and resource challenges associated with extending program response provisions to DoD civilian or contractor personnel which should be addressed.

With regard to sexual harassment and mental health, it is important to continually reinforce the responsibility of all individuals in the CENTCOM AOR to remain cognizant of the welfare of their fellow service members and co-workers and to encourage those exhibiting signs of difficulty to receive help.

**If confirmed, how would you assess the adequacy of such resources in the CENTCOM area of responsibility?**

If I am confirmed, I would consult with commanders in the field, who are directly responsible for these programs and most familiar with their requirements. I would also welcome external and internal audits of our programs and resources. The Sexual Assault and Prevention Program is critical for the well-being of our troopers, and I would support it in every way possible.

## **Deployed Civilians in the CENTCOM AOR**

**The President has called on all agencies of the executive branch to encourage the assignment of highly qualified federal civilian employees in support of CENTCOM operations.**

**If confirmed, what would be your objectives for improving and sustaining the support of federal civilians in the CENTCOM AOR?**

I am fully committed to the Department of Defense policy for building increased civilian deployment capacity. Our civilian employees who deploy in support of missions in the Central Command Area of Responsibility are capable and committed to supporting the Department's highest mission priorities. In Iraq, I have witnessed first-hand the capabilities and dedication our civilian employees bring to bear.

We must take advantage of the synergistic effect that the wide range of skill sets and talents resident in our civilian force can achieve. If I am confirmed, we would continue to review our global force employment planning to expand those opportunities.

We must execute the intent of Congress and the DoD in ensuring our civilian employees receive appropriate benefits and recognition when they volunteer to serve overseas and especially in war zones. We should also make every effort to assist civilian deployees in the same manner we do our deploying military personnel—from pre-deployment through deployment, as well as redeployment.

As outlined in counterinsurgency doctrine and by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, unity of effort is essential to winning the wars in which our nation is engaged—and fully utilizing and caring for deploying civilian employees within the CENTCOM AOR is absolutely essential.

## **Mental Health in Theater**

**The Army's Mental Health Advisory Team (MHAT) has made 5 separate assessments over the past several years detailing the immediate effects of combat on mental health conditions of US soldiers deployed to Iraq. The most recent study, MHAT V, found that stress and mental health problems increased with each subsequent month of deployment, and that "soldiers on their third or fourth deployment were at significantly higher risk" for mental health problems. These types of reports lend support to the fact that increasing numbers of troops are returning from duty in Iraq with post traumatic stress disorder, depression, and other mental health problems.**

**What is your understanding of the key findings of this and previous MHAT assessments, actions taken by the Army to address key findings, and the effect of such actions?**

The MHAT process has provided an objective assessment on what is transpiring with service members' psychological health and also valuable recommendations for future action on this issue. MHAT V produced 43 separate recommendations. Some, such as the recommendation to cross-train Army medics in behavioral health concepts, are already being implemented at the DA level; others, such as the recommendation to authorize assignment of a mental health professional to every Combat Aviation Brigade, are under review at the DA level. If I am confirmed, I would seek to implement recommendations which are independently actionable at the CENTCOM level and engage with the Services on those in their purview.

**If confirmed, what measures would you support to ensure ongoing mental health assessments of all US forces in Iraq?**

I would encourage and fully support future MHAT assessments if confirmed. This would include (but not be limited to) providing full access to information and staff input and feedback as appropriate.

**Do you have any views on how to best address the mental health needs of our troops, in terms of both prevention and treatment?**

My views are shaped by the recommendations of mental health professionals and by tools such as MHAT assessments.

Generally speaking, prevention begins with supporting service members and their families before service members deploy; this includes tough training at home station that builds camaraderie in units and gives troopers confidence that they can accomplish their tasks. Predictability of deployments and time at home in between deployments for troopers to 'reset' with their families are also important.

Many important preventive steps are already being taken in theater. Medics in theater are being trained on behavioral health topics so they can assist in identifying troopers who need help, and Suicide Risk Management Teams have been created to ensure troopers having difficulties get the help they need. Perhaps most critically, commanders are pushing the message that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness, and that it is essential to look out for battle buddies' mental health.

**Do you believe that mental health support and resources in theater are adequate to handle the needs of our deployed service members and at home for their families?**

If confirmed, I would conduct an assessment of mental health requirements and resources in theater. The extensive work completed by the MHAT will provide a good starting point for this assessment.

**If confirmed, would you request additional behavioral health resources from the services, if needed, to meet the needs of current and future units deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan?**

If a specific need was validated, I would absolutely request additional support. Our troopers serve bravely and selflessly, and we owe it to them to understand their needs and then act with all due haste to provide for those needs.

### **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.**

**Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?**

Yes

**Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?**

Yes

**Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Commander, US Central Command?**

Yes

**Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?**

Yes

**Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?**

Yes